THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) to (e) There have been some media reports regarding adulteration of food items.

The State/UT Governments which are responsible for implementation of the Prevention of Food Adulteration (PFA) Act, 1954 and Rules, 1955, have been requested from time to time to keep strict vigil on adulteration of food.

They have been further advised to draw food samples, test them and take strict action against the offenders whose samples do not conform to the standards laid down in the PFA Act and Rules.

Gas cracker project in Assam

*493. SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) the target set for the commissioning of gas cracker project 'Brahmaputra Cracker and Polymer Limited' (BCPL) in Assam showing the details of phase-wise implementation;

(b) the domestic as well as international market link envisaged for the products and for the downstream industries;

(c) the steps taken for awareness and training of entrepreneurs in phases for direct and indirect employment avenues; and

(d) the details of recruitment drive made and planned for future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI SRIKANT JENA): (a) The target for project commissioning is April 2012. The phase wise achievements of the project implementation in major areas is as given below:

An Agreement for constituting Joint Venture Company was executed on 18.10.2006 and M/s. Brahmaputra Cracker and Polymer Limited (BCPL) was incorporated on 8th January 2007. Hon'ble Prime Minister of India laid the foundation stone for the Project at Lepetkata in Dibrugarh, Assam on 9th April 2007. Feedstock supply agreements for Naptha with Numaligarh Refinery Limited (NRL) and Oil India Limited (OIL), and Gas with Oil and Natural Gas Commission (ONGC) were signed in 2007. M/s Engineers India Limited (EIL) were appointed as the Project Management Consultant in 2007. 1157 Acres of land has been acquired for the project, including township etc. Civil construction activities for various components of the Project, including Plant and Non-Plant buildings have been started. Technology licensors for all the major units have been selected and license agreements signed during 2008 and 2009. Pipeline survey work has been competed. Firm commitments of Procurement and Contract in terms of Work Orders/Purchase Orders/Fees stand at Rs. 1686 crores till date.

(b) There is a huge gap between demand and supply of Polymer materials in the domestic market and it is envisaged that the total product will be consumed by domestic polymer processors.

(c) Central Institute of Plastics Engineering and Technology (CIPET), Guwahati and Imphal are conducting various training programmes for Entrepreneurship Development and Skill Upgradation Programmes for the direct and indirect employment avenues for the upcoming Assam Gas Cracker Project. The training programmes are sponsored by different Government organizations like Gas Authority of India Limited (GAIL), Brahmaputra Cracker and Polymer Limited (BCPL), Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (DONER), Department of Science and Technology, Government of India, Financial Institutions like Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI), National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD), and North Eastern Development Finance Corporation Limited (NEDFI).

(d) Written Test for 60 Graduate Engineering Trainees (GETs)/Executives Trainee (ETs) and 20 experienced Executives have been conducted. Further manpower to be recruited in future will be based on the specific requirements for Construction phase, Pre-Commissioning. Commissioning and Operation and Maintenance phases.

Collaboration with US in agriculture

*494. SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA:
SHRI N.K. SINGH:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government has recently entered into a collaboration with the United States in the field of agriculture;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether US has agreed to provide help in agricultural research work to improve productivity; and

(d) if so, the facts and details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) to (d) Department of Agricultural Research and Education (DARE) has cooperation with USA under the Indo-US Agriculture Knowledge Initiative, signed on 12.11.2005. Besides this, there is cooperation between DARE/ICAR and some of the American Universities such as Cornell University and Lowa State University in the field of agricultural research.

Use of organic manure

*495. SHRI M. RAMA JOIS: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has taken/is planning to take measures to popularize and increase use of organic manure for agriculture and progressive reduction of the use of chemical